

His Holiness Patriarch Pavle of Serbia reposed at 10.45 am on Sunday 15 November, after taking the Body and Blood of Christ.



His Holiness Patriarch Pavle (Paul) (Stojčević) of Serbia (1914-2009) led the Serbian Orthodox Church for nineteen years. This period coincided with the break-up of the Yugoslavia created by the Croat Communist Josip Tito. Metropolitan Amfilohije (Radović) of Montenegro, the acting head of the Church's Holy Synod, said in a statement. 'The repose of Patriarch Pavle is a huge loss for Serbia'. President Boris Tadić said in a statement. 'There are people who bind together whole nations and Patriarch Pavle was such a person'.

Patriarch Pavle was born Gojko Stojčević in 1914 in Kućanci, a village then oppressed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, now in Croatia. In 1957, he became Bishop of Kosovo, by then home to a Nazi and Communist-imposed Albanian majority. His Holiness openly spoke of the hardships faced by Kosovo's native Serbs and on one occasion in the 1970s was attacked and beaten. The fate of Kosovo remained at the top of his agenda after he became Patriarch in 1990, when growing tensions, fed by the Vatican and reunited Germany, were leading toward the Communist country's violent break-up. This was exploited by those powers, who in their scramble for the former Yugoslavia, committed war crimes and bombed Belgrade in a geopolitical carve-up carried out by NATO and planned by Washington and its EU pawn.

A very humble man and also physically very short, His Holiness took public transport or walked, rather than ride in a chauffeur-driven car. He also cobbled his own shoes. Patriarch Pavle was loved by clergy and faithful all over the Orthodox world as a beacon of prayer and light in an ever-darkening atmosphere. It is expected that the next Patriarch will be Metropolitan Amfilohije, a highly educated man, who like Patriarch Pavle well understands the need for the Serbian Orthodox Church to remain faithful to the uncompromised Orthodox Tradition, resisting the pressures of EU and US imperialism.

Metropolitan Amfilohije is a great friend of the Russian Church and many of us were fortunate enough to receive his blessing at the Fourth All-Diaspora Council of the Russian Church in San Francisco in 2006, at which he played a crucial and uniting role.

To His Holiness Patriarch Pavle – Eternal Memory!